

GAIL HOOVER TO RUN FOR ALLENTOWN CITY COUNC

Longtime supporter of the GLBT community Gail Hoove, r has declared her candidacy for Allentown City Council. There will be four slots open with only one incumbent, David Howells Sr., running for reelection.

Democrat voters will chose four democratic candidates in the May 15 primary to run in the general election. PA-GALA and the Valley Free Press urge all Allentown residents to be registered to vote in order to help this excellent candidate win. The community must support Gail's campaign, come out to vote and get others to vote so that Gail will win in the primary and then go on to win in November.

PRIDE NEEDS YOU The LV Pride LEHIGH

VALLEY Festival Committee invites you to come to the next Pride meeting, to learn ways you can support the Festival. Pride is looking for volunteers for the following committees: Parade, Entertainment, Film Festival, KidSpace, First-Aid, Pride Guide, Fund-raising, Web site and Grounds. The next meeting is Wed., March 21 at 7pm at UUCLV, 424 Center Street, Bethlehem, PA

NEW BOARD AND AWARD FACT

FACT (Fighting AIDS Continuously Together) armounces its 2001 Board of Directors: President, Arlene Baron; Vice President Chuck Milositz; Treasurer, John Kroposky; and Secretary, Gary Adams.

The FACT Awards presented at Snow Ball 2000 went to: President's Award: Brian Marks Rainbow Award: Mark Bodkin Lifetime Achievement Award: TIE! Jay Gilbert and Bob actively work for their election.

Barton: FACT thanks the Valley Free Press does not discriminate on the they have done.

FOUR PRO-EQUALITY CANDIDATES TO RUN FOR ALLENTOWN CITY COUNCIL

For the first time ever, four proequal rights candidates have declared their candidacy for Allentown City Council. Along with community candidate Gail Hoover, also running are Julio Guridy, Jack

Siplak and Duane Tolson.

Julio Guridy has vocally supported egual employment rights. He spoke in favor of the amendment of sexual orientation to the City's antidiscrimination ordinance, at the 1998 City Council meeting. Jack Siplak was one of the 15 Allentown Human Relations Commissioners who voted unanimously to support introduction of the amendment to City Council. And Duane Tolson has stated his firm commitment to equal rights and antidiscrimination.

Supporting and electing these four candidates is the fastest way to achieve equal employment rights in Allentown. They have an excellent chance, but they need 100% of our support. We must come out and actively work for their election.

recipients for the wonderful work basises listed in the anti-discrimination statement on page 8, and asks that organizations requesting VFP to publish information maintain a similar policy.



ALLENTOWN HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

SCOTT LAUBNER NAMED COMMISSIONER

Scott Laubner, Co-Chair of GLISN at Dunn & Bradstreet, has been appointed to the Allentown Human Relations Commission.

As one of a committee of HRC Commissioners, Scott will hear and work to resolve complaints involving discrimination, in employment, housing and public accommodations in the City of Allentown.



FP SUBSCRIBER SURVEY RESULTS

With the very large number of responses to the survey (184 people), we were very happy to see how many people wrote how much they liked this paper. Many of the suggestions made were excellent.

Statistics: Almost every section has a large group of devoted followers. There isn't any part of the paper people consistently dislike. We may, however alternate some of the columns with some new ideas.

The front page and news items are read by nearly 100%. Even Planet Parenthood, which is the least read article, is closely followed by 52% (96) of the respondents. More than one reader said Planet Parenthood was particularly important to them because they had never seen a regular column about GLBT families in a GLBT newspaper before.

The longer articles by columnists are always or usually read by 75% to 83% of the respondents. Also always or usually read are the calendar (83%) and the quotes (87%). The quiz is always or usually read by 66%. Many of those people wrote notes indicating the quiz was one of their favorite parts of the paper, on the other hand, some people don't care much for quizzes. The comic is regularly read by 78%, but some times people don't get it, or don't think it's funny.

If you mailed in a comment or question, and we didn't mention it in this issue, don't worry, we will. And thanks for all the positive supportive responses!

(See more survey information on pages 6 & 7.)



ADOPTION CONCERN

Friends in New Jersey, who are trying to adopt a child from China, have alerted us to this latest anti-gay catch-22 style problem:

"The big problem is this: Our main adoption agency is in PA and everything is fine there. But they said we had to have a NJ agency do the homestudy. China is requiring homestudy agencies to make a statement about whether or not they think the applicant is gay, (even though they don't want these little girls, they don't want them to go to same-sex couples). But this NJ agency is saying they can't make any statement at all about that, because to even address sexual orientation is a violation of NJ's anti-discrimination laws. So isn't this ironic — a law designed to protect us may now be keeping us from adopting."

Yet the latest news reports from China indicate that a group of Chinese doctors and psychologists have now decided to remove homosexuality from their list of mental illnesses. (Japan removed it in 1995, the US removed it in 1973). A Chinese doctor on the panel was quoted as saying "homosexuals can actually lead normal healthy

lives."

So the question now remains, if China does not deem homosexuality unhealthy, will they then allow US adoptions by gay or lesbian couples?

PFLAG NEWS

PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) is currently working on an essay contest for young people. Details are still being discussed, but the Morning Call has confirmed its support.

March 20: Reading PFLAG Meeting. Kas Page, a counselor specializing in addictions co-dependency and sexuality issues, will be the speaker.

April 8: Bethlehem PFLAG Meeting.

April 17: Reading PFLAG Meeting. The topic may be a

transgender information presentation.

A TWIST ON FRED PHELPS

Rev. Fred Phelps and his band of rabidly anti-gay followers, decided to picket an Ann Arbor, Michigan gay bar on Feb. 3. When bar co-owners Keith Orr and Martin Conteras heard of it, they got an idea that would support the community. They put out an email call for pledges to benefit the Wartenaw Rainbow Action Project, a local gay advocacy group. To kick off the pledge drive, Orr and Conteras pledged \$1 for every minute Phelps picketed the bar.

Though there was little time, the pledge drive news spread across the nation and within 48 hours pledges totaled \$107 for every minute Phelps picketed. "We raised over \$6,000 for the community without spending a dime, all as a result of Phelps visit. I was astonished." said Orr. On Feb 17, when Phelps arrived with 4 adults and two children, over 100 people inside the bar celebrated each minute he picketed. "We hope everyone across the country does this wherever he goes!" said Orr.

MCCLY LENTEN SERVICES

An opportunity to come together in a more casual setting than the Sunday services and talk about faith. Wednesday March 14, March 28, and April 4 at 7 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall at the Church, 424 Center St. Bethlehem..

March 25: Delores Berry Returns to MCCLV:. MCC is pleased that the dynamic evangelist Rev. Delores Berry will be with MCC for the regular Sunday Service at 5:50 p.m. Rev. Berry is a UFMCC pastor. This special service will be signed for the hearing impaired.



Dear Denise, It's tax time and my partner and I are looking for some help. How should we handle deductions for our children.? **Signed**, **Tax Concerns**

Dear TC.

Good question, however the answer in PA is not too

encouraging.

In 1992, when the most recent study of gay famlies was released, there were between 1 million and 5 million lesbian mothers in the U.S. and between 1 million and 3 million gay fathers. An estimated 6 - 14 million children had a lesbian or gay parent. Lesbians who had become pregnant through artificial insemination were raising approximately 10,000 children in 1992. Obvioulsy those statistics have multiplied.

Parents want to be able to claim the maximum in tax credits for their children. But only one partner can claim the child on their individual tax return. Although no state currently recognizes same-sex marriage, some do allow second-parent adoptions for same-sex couples. With second parent adoption, couples gain authority to split the cost of raising their children without losing out. One legal parent might make sizable long-term investments in the child's name, while the other legal

parent assumes the ordinary expenses.

The problem is, last year a PA State Court decision ended the possibility of any new same-sex second parent adoptions in PA. And up until then, only about 100 same-sex couples had been granted second parent adoptions in PA. So unless you were one of those 100 couples or you got a second parent adoption in another state, only the one legal parent can deduct the child.

Denise McKelvey is a local financial advisor. Readers should recognize that this column is one opinion and may not apply to their financial situation.

GLORA EVENTS

GLORA, the Gay and Lesbian Organization of Reading and Allentown wants people to join in. "We want GLORA to go on indefinitely, so please help GLORA by organizing an event" says GLORA organizers, "We realize not everyone can accommodate a large group at their home, but simply suggesting an idea and providing the information (prices, directions, reservations, contact numbers) would be a help to the group."

Here's your chance to suggest a social event you would enjoy! Movie, hike, potluck, museum tour, bowling? Contact GLORA via email: <GLORAinPA@aol.com> or by mail GLORA. PO Box 1952. Allentown. PA. 18105-1952.

There will be a GLORA potluck supper on March 17 in Bethlehem.

LETTERS TO THE MORNING CALL

Within the last few weeks, the Morning Call has published several excellent letters to the editor about important GLBT issues. Don Kohn, PFLAG-LV President, wrote a greatshort letter "thanking" anti-gay columnist Michael McManus for stating that people who are married live longer, thus adding to the reasons why parents of gay and lesbian children want them to be able to legally marry.

Jim Fillman wrote a beautiful letter about MCC's ecumenical blessing of relationships service. A gentleman named Scott Heisler took issue with Donald P. Russo for letting schools off the hook for avoiding strict anti-hate language codes. And VFP editor Trish Sullivan praised a column by Margie Peterson that warned parents to stop anti-gay language in young children before it escalates to violence.

HOT NEW BINGO BINGO FOR F.A.C.T.

Looking for something different to do on a Sunday night? Help raise some money for FACT (Fighting AIDS Continuously Together), and have a good time too. Join FACT at Diamonz in Bethlehem every Sunday at 5 pm for BINGO. (Blue hair and cateye glasses optional).

GLISN INVITES YOU TO A PARTY AND PLAY

On March 30, the Lehigh Valley Chapter of GLISN, GLBT employee group at Dun & Bradstreet is organizing a social, starting at for around 6:00 pm in the upstairs performance space of The Civic Theater in Allentown, all are invited.

Hors d'oeurves from Mom's Pizza, the new lesbian owned pizza parlor across the street, and beverages will be on hand.

BARNÉS & NOBLE GLBT BOOK CLUB

The B&N GLBT book club will be discussing "Heaven's Coast" by Mark Doty on March 20. The Club will discuss "My Lesbian Husband" by Barrie Jean Borich, on April 17, and "Fall on Your Knees" by Ann Marie MacDonald on May 15. Discussion begins at 7:00 pm in the cafe at Barnes & Noble in Whitehall. Beverages are provided free by B&N.

THEATRE OUTLET

Just in time for St. Patrick's Day, the Outlet's "Out of Ireland" Mainstage Season continues with the area premiere of Moonshine by award-winning Irish playwright Jim Nolan. Directed by Artistic Director George Miller, Moonshine runs March 8 -25 in TO's downtown Allentown theater at 29 N 9th St.

The Outlet's Art Lobby Gallery complements Moonshine with "Stones And Magic", an exhibition of paintings by artist Julie Miller. For more information or tickets, contact TO at 610-820-9270, <theatreo@aol.com>, or <www.theatreoutlet.org>.

BINGO AS IF PRODUCTIONS
MONZ FUNDRAISER
AT STONEWALL

Stonewall & AS IF Productions bring you "Some Girls" A DRAG EXTRAVAGANZA the likes of which you have never seen before! Sunday, April 1 at 8 pm. Cover \$5, Happy Hour prices in effect from 8-10pm.

The fund raiser event for AS IF (the documentary film organization) will feature many first time drag performances by Stonewall management and staff, and several AS IF board members. Come see your friends as you've never seen them before for an evening of FUN! FUN! FUN! So if you are dying to see Jimmy, Rich, Rob, and others, in drag, this is your chance. Maxie and L'il Debbie will also be in attendance. Surprises Galore!!! Come root for Anne, Rafael, Varin, Steve and others as they brave the footlights.

GMLV

Gay Men of the LV is a social group for gay men that strives to create a safe, healthy and caring environment to develop friendships and to provide support and understanding and to learn more about our community.

March 24th - Game night. Bring a favorite game and play along.

April 14th - GMLV presents the film "Urbania."

April 28th - Game Night.

GMLV meets every 2nd and 4th Saturday at 7 pm at the UUCLV, 424 Center St., Bethlehem. Refreshments are served, a one dollar donation is requested To give your time or financial support to GMLV or to help plan a new event, please speak to Joe Canto or email us at <gaymenlv@hotmail.com>.

QUEST AT LAFAYETTE

QuEST is a Lafayette College student group for campus GLBT and allies community. The group works to establish safe zones (through education and actual safe space), runs support group meetings, attends marches, runs on campus antihate / social events which includes surrounding colleges, works to establish special GLBT dorm housing, brings in speakers, (including Alix Olsen coming on April 25).Contact: Lafayette College QuEST, Easton, PA 18042-1784 <Quest_Lafayette@hotmail.com>, <Quest@lafayette.edu>

FACT 2001 SCHEDULE

May 20 and July 29: tentative dates for new events September 9: Summer Games December 2: Snow Ball

LV GAY MEN'S CHORUS

The Lehigh Valley Gay Men's Chorus conducted elected board members at its annual meeting in January 2001. New members are R. Young, Brian Matthias, Stephanie Burke, Lois Bly, Karina Seebohm and Michael Vizzaro. Retiring board members Patrick Kenny (Chair) and Christopher L. Miller (Treasurer) were thanked for their years of service on behalf of the chorus.

If you would like to be a part of the LV Gay Men's Chorus but don't sing, contact the chorus at 610-366-3320 to find out how you can volunteer your time helping at concerts, stuffing envelopes for mailings, fund raising or other administrative duties.

GLOSS EVENTS

The next GLOSS (Gay and Lesbian Organized Sports Society) game night will be on March 24 at Allyson's house (note change of venue). Racquetball continues Tuesdays at 8 and Saturdays at 9 at the Allentown Racquet Club. To get further information or directions contact GLOSS at 610-434-2966.

ACC CONCERTS

ACCO, A Chorus Celebrating Women, will perform light hearted and laughable songs on Thursday, April 19 at 8:00 pm at Godfrey Daniels, 7 E. 4th St., Bethlehem, PA. Call 610-867-2390 for reservations and ticket prices.

ACCO, will be celebrating the community on Saturday, April 28, 12:30-1:30 pm, at a performance for "Spring on Fourth," at New and 3rd Sts., South Bethlehem. The concert is free.

LAVENDER LENS 2 ENCORE

An Encore Presentation of Lavender Lens 2: Your Friends & Neighbors will be May 5 & 6, 8 p.m. at the Theatre Outlet, Admission: \$6.00.

The May 5 viewing will be open to the general public. May 6 is College Day, open to students and professors. Proceeds will go towards funding the transfer of the digital 8 format films to regular film stock, which will make the Lavender Lens movies eligible in GLBT film festivals. Copies of both films will be available for purchase. For more info and tickets: contact Theatre Outlet, 29 N 9th St. Allentown, 610-820-9130, <theatreo@aol.com>.

WHERE'S TRAVIS?

We just heard from Travis Simmons, VFP cub reporter and columnist, and he has been traveling again. He's now in Watertown, NY, up near the Canadian border. Travis is working on a short story for publication and some VFP columns. He's also preparing to take his GED exam and enroll in college as a journalism major. Stay tuned.

CALENDAR4 MARCH 2001

ACCO-A Chorus Celebrating Women. Rehearsals, Thursdays 7-10pm at

JUCLV Bethlehem, 610,760,1759

AIDS Outreach-112 N. 5th St. Allentown, PA 610.435.8424

AIDSWALK- AIDSWALK Lehigh Valley

610.974.8701 www.regiononline.com/lvaids ASC-AIDS Service Center 610,974,8701

As If Productions-Documentary Film Makers BEARS- Lehigh Valley Bears Club, meets at Stonewall, 1st Sat.-monthly, 8pm.

Allentown PA 18105-1396 BMA- Bucks/Montgomery Alliance for Gay and esbian Concerns 215-529-0360 B&N- Barnes and Noble Gay &Lesbian Book

Club, White Hall store, Monthly, 7:00pm. Bowling- Thursday Nights, Parkway Lanes, 610-691-8303

310-432-8943, <.civictheater, com>

CIVIC and 19th St. Theater, 527 N 19th St. Enigma Players- 610-432-0706 EQUAL!at Agere 610.712.5532

ACT- Fighting AIDS Continuously Together 10.820.5519 GLEE-gay and lesbian empowered employees at Air Products GLASS-at Lehigh Univ. 610.758.3469

GLISN- at Dun & Bradstreet, vagranthollow.com/GLISN/> GLORA-Gay and Lesbian Organization of Reading and Allentown (Social gatherings, rarious dates) Newsletter-The Tassle. Write to: P.O. Box 1952, Allentown PA18105-1952, email-GLORAinPA@AOL.COM

GLOSS - Gay and Lesbian Organized Sports Society, P.O. Box 21862 Lehigh Valley, PA Volleyball, Tennis, Racquet Ball 8002

10.434.2966 GMLV- Gay Men of the Lehigh Valley, 2nd and th Saturday Monthly 7pm UUCLV, Bethlehem,

10.954.7775 ntegrity- Lesbian & Gay Episcopalians 1st Monday monthly 7pm Trinity Episcopal Church nd Floor Chapel, 44 E. Market Street Bethlehem. 610-758-8642

S- Kindred Spirits- Support, discussion, and ocial group for lesbians and bisexual women ridays at UUCLV, 6:30pm, Contact: Chris at 10-868-0248 iberty High School- Mission Equality : Gay StraightAlliance VGMC -Lehigh Valley Gay Men's Chorus,

Rehearsals Tuesdays,Wesley Un. Meth Church, Beth. 610.366.3320, MCC - Metropolitian Community Church

gmc@hotmail.com V,424 Center St. (UUCLV), Bethlehem,6 pm sundays, 610.954.7775 ICC- Northampton Community College Gay esbian and Bisexual Student Union, Meetings

very Monday fron 4pm to 6pm at CC114 Cohen Lounge),, College Center call 10.861.5541(#1386)or882-2531 9th St/Civic Theatre - 610-432-8943 ICFM- New Covenant Family Ministries, undays, 11am, Open Space Gallery, 610-791-716 / 740-3097, email NCFM98@aol.com Sunday Monday

4 MCC

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MCC

WDIY

NCFM UUCLV

11 PFLAG

MCC WDIY UUCLV NCFM

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APRIL 2001

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MEETING 28 MCC 27 GLOSS LVGMC

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19 BAA Bowling GLOSS ACCO AT GODREY'S

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MAY 2001 Monday

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Lavender Lens 2 BEARS at TO 12 GMLV

BOARD LVGMC GLOSS Bowling UUCLV MEETING Lavender7 ACCO 8 GLOSS RAA Bowling MCC Lens 2 WDIY WDIYat TO LVGMC GLOSS KS **GLOSS** NCFM UUCLV PFLAG 14 PRIMARY16 18 Bowling MCC WDIY UUCLV NCFM RAA GLOSS **ELECTION** Reading RAA WDIY **PFLAG** GLOSS ACCO KS **BOOK CLUB** 20 FACT 26 GMLV 22 23 25 21 24 Bowling GLOSS RAA WDIY WDIY NCFM UUCLV ACCO LVGMC **GLOSS** KS GLOSS RAA

30

Wednesday

⊅RIDE

Out There-Students at Cedar Crest College A-GALA - PA Gay and Lesbian Alliance or Political Action, (Voter's Information Booklet, nd Political Lobbying)to become a member end \$20 to: PA-GALA, P.O.Box 20825 Lehigh alley 18002 (610.432.5449) FLAG - LV Parents Families and Friends of esbians and Gays, 2nd Sundays 3pm 10.967.5219 ride - LV Pride , (Pride Festival)

10.770.6200, email: <lvpride@hotmail.com>,

www.pridelv.org>

RAA- Rainbow AA meetings, Mon. & Thurs., Episcopal Church 16th and Turner, Atown Ren- Renaissance Transgendered Assoc., PO Box 3624 Atown, PA 18016 610- 821- 2955 renlv @ ren.org Rainbow Space - Muhlenberg College Organization 610.821.3244 Reading P-FLAG-610.488.7533 or 670.8029

Safe Space- At Lehigh U. 610.758.3469
Saint John's Lutheran Church- A welcoming, gay affirming church, 32 S. 5th st. Allentown 610.435.1587
Softball-(Women's) call Diamonz, 610.865.1028

T.O. - Theatre Outlet-29 Nth 9th St, Allentown, 610-820-9270. TST- Touchstone Theatre, 321 E. 4th St. Beth.

610-867-1689, touchstone@nni.com
Unity- 26 N. 3rd St. Emmaus, 767-4417
UUCLV-Unitarian UniversalistChurchof the
Lehigh Valley, 424 Center Street, Bethlehem,
18018 610.866.7652.

VFP - Valley Free Press 610.432.5449 VYH - Valley Youth House weekly Group counseling for troubled GLBT youth. 610-432-6481 WDIY - 88.1 fm 93.9 fm Saturday 7:30-pm

Assorted Women, Sunday 6:30pm- This Way Out-610.694.8100 SPECIAL UPCOMING EVENTS: RAINBOW BOWLING- EVERY THURSDAY

GLOSS RACQUETBALL TUESDAYS & SATURDAYS
BINGO FOR FACT -AT DIAMONZ- SUNDAYS
LIBERTY HIGH SCHOOL GAY/ STRAIGHT
ALLIANCE 2ND AND 4TH THURSDAYS

KIND<u>RED SPIRITS- FRI</u>DAYS
'MOONSHIN<u>E' AT T.O. -</u> MARCH 8-25

MCC LENTEN SERVICE - MARCH 14

GLORA POTLUCK - MARCH 17
UUCLY CHILI DINNER AND AUCTION - MAR 17
B&N GLBT BOOK CLUB

READING PFLAG

MARCH 20

PRIDE MEETING - MARCH 21

GLOSS GAME NIGHT - MAR 24 GMLV GAME NIGHT - MAR 24

DELORES BERRY AT MCC - MARCH 25

MCC LENTEN SERVICE - MARCH 28
GLISH SOCIAL AT CIVIC THEATRE
'GLASS MENAGERIE'

"AS IF' FUNDRAISER AT STONEWALL - APRIL 1

MCC LENTEN SERVICE - APRIL 4

LY BEARS - APRIL 7

GMLV MOVIE NIGHT - APRIL 14

READING PFLAG

B&N GLBT BOOK CLUB

APRIL 17
ACCO AT GODFREY'S - APRIL 19

QUEST HOSTS ALIX OLSEN AT LAFAYETTE COLLEGE APRIL 25 GMLV GAME NIGHT - APRIL 28

ACCO 'SPRING ON FOURTH' - APRIL 28
THE INFORMATION IN THIS
CALENDAR IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.
CALL TO CONFIRM. TO POST IND
CONTACT VFP - 610-432-5449
EMAIL: LIZTRISH@AOL.COM

MCCLY'S NATIONAL FREEDOM TO MARRY DAY SERVICE A HUGE SUCCESS

The Ecumenical Blessing of Relationships to celebrate Lambda Legal and Educational Defense Fund's "National Freedom to Marry Day," hosted by The Metropolitan Community Church of

the Lehigh Valley, was a resounding success and beautiful moment in Lehigh Valley GLBT history. 153 people attended, including 33 same-

sex couples who participated in the Blessing. This was undoubtedly the largest gay-oriented religious service ever held in

the Lehigh Valley area.

The nine clergy who officiated led the couples through a "Blessing of the Water," a ritual created by the MCC Planning

Committee. Two-by-two the couples approached the altar and received a potted bulb, a symbol of their future growth together.

A poll of couples taken at the beginning of the service found that more than 1/2

had been together for more than 5 years.

One couple had been together 42 years.

Old Testament passages about David and Jonathan and Ruth and Naomi were read. Manuel Diaz, of MCCLV, read the Vermont Civil Union Law. Allyson Hamm of Pride LV, read a sacred Native American passage. Don Kohn of LV PFLAG, lead the couples in a responsive reading. The LV Gay Men's Chorus, ACCO (A Chorus Celebrating Women) and a combined choir from the Lehigh Valley Unitarian/Universalist Church and MCCLV and

others, preformed musical selections. Steve Ziminsky of MCCLV played piano. The clergy present were: MCCLV Pastor, Rev. Elizabeth Goudy; the Revs. Nancy Adams, Elaine Ely, Em Finney, and Emily Jean Gilbert, all associated with the Penn

Northeast Conference of the United Church of Christ; the Revs. Randy Jones, retired United Methodist, Tom Comier, Independent Interfaith, Dr. Harold Kreider, retired Mennonite, and Kim Wilson, Unitarian/Universalist Association intern

NEW PA HIV / AIDS POLICY The Pennsylvania Department of Health

unveiled this week, a program to report the names of HIV patients to state health officials, the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette reports. Under the proposed plan, HIV would be added to the list of 52 diseases and conditions now being reported. Some AIDS activists expressed concern that the proposed plan could have a negative effect, by making some at-risk people reluctant to be tested because they do not want their results reported to the

government. The proposal will now begin a

process of public review.

CIVIL UNION ANNOUNCEMENTS

To announce your Vermont Civil Union or to get information on how to get a Vermont Civil Union (step by step), email Valley Free Press at < liztrish @ aol.com > or phone 610-432-5449.

LV PRIDE NATIONAL FREEDOM TO MARRY DAY DANCE ATTENDED BY OVER 125

Pride of the Lehigh Valley premiered the LV's 1st-ever NFTMD Dance & celebration on Friday, February 9, 2001 at the UUCLV/MCCLV. Over 100 turned out for the festivities, plus 26 volunteers who gave of their time and energy before, during and after the event. Several of these were representatives from GLBT organizations on hand to answer questions and distribute information. PA-GALA's Liz Bradbury and Trish Sullivan were present, as well as Helen Early, Don Kohn, and Roberta Kreider from PFLAG. Also greatly enjoyed and appreciated by all were donations from Mom's Pizza (524 N. 19th Allentown)!

Many thanks to everyone for their support and especially to Tom Cormier, John Early, Tabatha Gartner, Allyson Diane Hamm, Brenda Hoelman, Constance Kristofik and Ilse Stoll of the Pride Board for their planning efforts and time donated towards making this dance a success!

Next year, the NFTM Dance will be an even grander event!

IMMIGRATION ACT INTRODUCED

Congressman Jerrold Nadler (D-NY) has introduced a bill to the House of Representatives that would recognize gay or lesbian relationships for the purpose of immigration. Currently 14 countries have laws that recognize gay or lesbian families, with regard to immigration.

Immigration status is one of the most significant benefits given to opposite sex couples who legally marry. In the Lehigh Valley there are many committed binational same-sex couples who greatly need and deserve the protection of this marriage benefit. Though this bill has little chance at this time for passage, it is extremely significant as it is the first time the issue has even been considered by the US Federal Government.

TO BE ABLE TO VOTE
IN THE MAY 15 PRIMARY
YOU MUST BE REGISTERED
TO VOTE BY APRIL 15.

ANOTHER VIEW BY WILL FETTERMAN

YOUR HEALTH-WHEN IN DOUBT CHECK IT OUT

Twenty years ago the gay community was more interested in partying rather than living a healthy, responsible lifestyle. By the mid-1980s, the AIDS crisis changed all that. For a time, AIDS was labeled by homophobes as "the gay disease." We know that wasn't, and isn't true. While the AIDS Crisis has raised awareness with health issues, much remains to be addressed. The following information concerns male health issues--gay, bi, and straight--which we all need to know.

Cancer of the testicles isn't much talked about, but it is becoming a serious health concern, particularly for men in their teens through 30s. Be aware, however, that men of all ages are at risk. Just as women should do a monthly self-examination to determine the early warnings of breast cancer, it's recommended that men make monthly examinations of the testicles.

The National Cancer Institute recommends the following:

The self exam for TC (Testicular Cancer) is best performed after a warm bath or shower. Stand in front of a mirror and check for any swelling on the scrotum skin. Then, examine each testicle using both hands. Place the index and middle fingers under the testicle with the thumbs placed on top. Roll the testicle gently between the thumbs and fingers. There should be no pain felt when doing this. If one testicle seems slightly larger than the other, that's normal.

Then, find the epididymis -- the soft, tubelike structure behind the testicle that collects and carries the sperm. Finding this will help you know your body better, and avoid confusion. Cancerous lumps are usually found on the sides of a testicle, but can also show up on the

front.

If you find a lump, see your doctor immediately. It may not be cancer, but just an infection. If it is TC, without treatment the cancer will spread. Make the reason for the appointment very clear to the receptionist and don't be afraid to talk to the doctor during the appointment.

Other signs of TC to keep in mind are:

--Any enlargement of a testicle

--A significant loss of size of a testicle

--A feeling of heaviness in the scrotum

--A dull ache in the lower abdomen or the groin

--A sudden collection of fluid in the scrotum

--Any pain or discomfort in a testicle or in the scrotum

--Blood in the urine

-- Enlargement or tenderness of the breasts.

For more information, contact the web site of the Testicular Cancer Resource Center at http://www.acor.org/diseases/TC.

The other common male cancer is Prostate Cancer. The 1999 cancer statistics for U.S. males cite that 29% of new cancer diagnoses were prostrate cancer. Compared with other types of cancer, prostate cancer is relatively slow growing, and may exist years before obvious detection. The most common symptom is difficulty in urination. If not treated in time, it typically spreads to the lymph nodes, the lungs, and the bones, especially bones in the hip and lower back. Men 35 years and older should have a yearly prostate examination; many doctors are now recommending that men over 55 have an examination every six months. Unlike testicular cancer, there are no self-examination methods for early warning. This is a cancer that hides. The surest way to fight it is to go to your doctor for regular examinations. More information can be obtained from the web site for the Prostate Cancer Infolink at: https://www.comed.com/Prostate.

Remember--You matter! So, please, take good care of yourself!

BEARS CLUB MEETS AT STONEWALL

The Lehigh Valley BEARS (a social group for hairy men and their admirers) meets the 1st Saturday of the month at 8 pm at Stonewall upstairs under the moose head. Future get togethers are planned. For more information or to be put on our email list call Mike at 610-767-3433 or email <LVBearclub@hotmail.com> or <mtnbear@fast.net>.



Last month's VFP survey (see articles pages 1 & 7) received many interesting concerns, suggestions, and questions. We'll be addressing them in "What's That About" over the next few months.

WTA: From a graphic design point of view I think the "Distelfink" comic should have a drop shadow like the other articles.

Dear Survey Respondent: You are right. Consider it done.

WTA: Four or five people say the paper is hard to read because the font is so small.

Editors: Yes we agree, the font is small, but increasing the size would cut several articles. We can not afford to make the paper larger. But one person suggested several things that could make it easier to read and we are testing them, including increasing the size of the margins.

WTA: Three or four people expressed concern that their VFP doesn't come on time. Two people said that since they paid PA-GALA for a subscription they were unhappy they didn't get the paper sooner.

Editors: When we finish the newspaper, we take it immediately to a copy center to be printed, when it's done we fold it, stuff the envelopes and take it to be bulk mailed. It usually takes about 8 hours or less from "enroute to the printer" to "in the hands of the bulk mail guys" at Lehigh Valley Post Office.

If you live in the Lehigh Valley, you get the paper the next day. We consider that the day the paper "comes out." The next day after that, we take the remaining 700 papers to the drop off points. The day the paper comes out is rarely the first of the month. Februray's issue came out on the 9th. If you didn't get last month's paper on the 9th, then there might be something wrong with your address label, or your mail delivery service.

If you look carefully you'll see almost all the event dates are later than the day the paper came out.

Lastly; although PA-GALA pays for you to get VFP in the mail, the money you donate to PA-GALA doesn't pay for the production of the VFP. Your PA-GALA membership fee goes to run PA-GALA, produce the candidate guide, pay for lobbying mailings, etc. Your subscription to VFP is a gift PA-GALA gives you for joining, like the umbrella PBS gives you when you join them.

WTA: A few people asked if they could help us produce or mail VFP so it could get to them faster.

Editors: Doing the mailings is the simplest and fastest part, so we don't need help on that, but could really use someone to be in charge of Planet Parenthood every month.

WTA: Why does it say 2101 at the top of the Distelfink cartoon, shouldn't it say 2001?

Ruby Zebu: Sorry, the font's a little hard to read. Actually it says "two slash zero one," meaning February 2001.

KINDRED SPIRITS

Kindred Spirits, the support / social group for lesbian and bisexual women and their friends, meets Friday evenings at UUCLV, 424 Center St. Bethlehem at 6:30 pm. For more info: call Donna: 610-997-0607 or Chris: 610-868-0248.

A VIEW FROM A DYKE BY LIZ BRADBURY RESULTS FORM LAST MONTH'S MAIL-IN SURVEY DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF... 40.2% 44.5 % 4.3 % (82) (2) (8) GAY GAY BISEXUAL MALE FEMALE FEMALE (8) (1) (8) (7) (1) (0) BISEXUAL BISEXUAL STRAIGHT STRAIGHT NO OTHER (74) LESBIAN MALE FEMALE MALE ANSWER **184 PEOPLE SAY** DO YOU Surveys were sent to CONSIDER DO YOU 290 households YOURSELF CONSIDER (about 350 people) the mail. Within 25 days, 184 people responded There is the mail of the mail o MALE. YOURSELF TRANS SEXUAL? responded. That's half of the people we mailed to

0 % (O) YES return is pretty amazing and very ANSWER gratifying! Thanks everyone. 84% consider themselves gay or lesbian. AGE? No one indicated they were transsexual. The responses were (amazingly) evenly split, male and female. Most respondents (70%)

were over 40 years old. A huge 87.5% indicated 50s 60s 70s NO TEENS 20s 30s 40s (2) (9) (37) (82) (38) (7) (6)ANSWER they had gone to an event 1.0% 4.8% 20% 44.5% 20.6% 3.8% 3.2% (3) because they had read because they had read about it in VFP. 53 people

28.8 % 71.1 % (53) (131)

27.7%

(5) (51) (128)
REGULARLY SOMETIMES RARELY OR NEVER

(183) NO

HAVE YOU EVER

VOLUNTEERED

ORGANIZATION

DO YOU CHECK

INFORMATION

ON LOCAL

THE WEB SITES OF

LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

OINED OR

FOR AN

BECAUSE

ABOUT

TO GET

EVENTS?

YOU READ

IT IN VEP?

HAVE YOU **EVER GONE** TO AN EVENT BECAUSE YOU READ ABOUT IT IN VFP?

DO YOU

HAVE

TO

ACCESS

EMAIL?

and more than 15% of what we believe is the

entire VFP readership (about 1000). A 50%

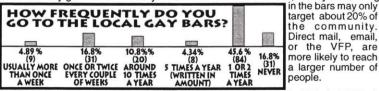
(28 %) said they had volunteered or joined a group due to VFP. Organizations should note that just putting in an article that says volunteers are needed is not very effective. Better to approach potential volunteers personnally.

investigate.

87.5% have access to email, but only 5 people (2.7%) said they regularly check web sites of local organizations. Only 27.7% said they sometimes check

87.5 % 12.5 % 1.08 % them, but nearly 70%, NO NO ANS. said they rarely or never check websites. Conclusion: Don't waste much volunteer time on web sites.

About 21% of respondents indicated they go to local gay bars once every two weeks or more. But 79% indicated they go less than once a month and 62% (115 people) indicated they go once or twice a year or never. So, solely advertising in the bars may only



87.5 % 12.5 %

(23) NO

69.5%

a larger number of people.

IS "WARMLINE" GAY-FRIENDLY? BY TRISH SULLIVAN

As a person who came of age in a time when psychological support for gay men and lesbians consisted of institutionalization and shock therapy, I will be forever skeptical of mental health services. Homosexuality is no longer classified as an illness, but some mental health professionals still operate from the position that if a person is gay or lesbian, they need therapy. So when a PFLAG Board Member gave me a brochure that said a new "Warmline" telephone service offered support to people in our community, I wondered.

When mainstream organizations set up some kind of program offering information to GLBT people who may call in with questions, it is the responsibility of each one of us to be sure this information is accurate, helpful, positive and complete. At the very least VFP encourages people in the community who hear about this kind of mainstream offering, to contact VFP so we can

I spoke with Casey Garrett, Director of Warmline. Ms. Garrett told me that Warmline does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation. She said the staff recognizes mental health problems can be chemically induced, or situational and that one is gay or lesbian doesn't inherently mean they need mental health services. The purpose of

But what if a person is lonely and depressed simply because they don't know anyone else in their community who is gay?

Warmline is to keep lines of communication open to those challenged by loneliness, confusion and other mental health concerns. Warmline's employees, who have both classroom and on the job training, are not therapists or counselors themselves.

They represent a wide variety of backgrounds. They don't provide counseling, nor give advice. They listen, inform, discuss issues and act as a sounding board to let the caller come to their own conclusions. All conversations are kept confidential. The goal is to respond to the caller before they reach a crisis point.

But what if, a person is lonely and depressed simply because they don't know anyone else in their community who is gay? What would

Warmline say then?

Interestingly enough Warmline has a fairly good list of GLBT organizations. Some are national: GLSEN (The Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network), or regional: The Attic (for GLBT youth) in Philadelphia. And they also have Lehigh Valley groups listed including; PFLAG, GLORA, GLOSS, and the Valley Free Press. Warmline is in the process of updating their resource files. Since they didn't have much information about these local groups other than contact numbers, we are sending over some issues of VFP for reference. If you represent a GLBT organization in the Lehigh Valley, you may want to send them additional information about your group. The address for Warmline is P.O. Box 4116, Allentown, PA 18105-4116.

Warmline has someone available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week including all holidays at: 610-820-8451, or 610-820-8549. There is no fee.

Warmline is an outreach program of Family and Counseling Services and is affiliated with Contact, USA. Funding comes from Lehigh and Northampton Counties MH/MR/D&A. Nice to see our own tax dollars actually including support for our own community.

OR MORE SURVEY INFORMATION, SEE PAGES 1 AND 6

1. Lily Tomlin is years old this year C. 61 D.70 B. 52

Lily Tomlin's life partner of 30 years is A. Jane Chambers B. Jane Wagner

C. Ruth Buzzi D. Sheila Kruehl

3. Who recently said, "I read once that one in seven people is gay, I paid attention to that because we have seven children. So chances are one of them is going to be gay or is gay already and

doesn't know it yet."? A. Kate Capshaw C. Steven Speilberg's wife

B. John Goodman D. Warren Beatty

4. Who's picture was in the Morning Call with the article about MCC's Ecumenical Blessing Service?

A. Pat and Jeanette B. Don and Melinda C. Steve and Robert D. John and Fabio

5. The Primary Election on May 15 will decide:

A. The candidates for Mayor of Allentown

B. The candidates for Allentown, Bethlehem and Easton City Council

C. Many Lehigh Valley School Board elections D. The Candidates for PA Governor

What hometown (Lehigh Valley) young woman's picture was on the front cover of MS. Magazine 's January issue?

A. Susan Westenhoffer C. Alix Olsen

B. Robin Renee D. Lisa Boscola

7. Who plays the gay guy on CBS's new sitcom?

A. Jason Bateman B. Luke Perry C. Danny Nucci D. David Spade

8. Name Barbara Streisand's gay son. A. James Streisand B. Jason Gould

C. David Nye D. Keith Gould 9. What "dot-com" pledged 5 million dollars when it

because the first corporate sponsor of the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative? A. Etrade B. Intel C. Ebay D.Yahoo!

10. Who were "Absolutely Fabulous" ?

A. Edina and Patsy B. Mabel and Janey C. Eleanor and Lorena D.Alice and Trixie

and C 1.C 2.B 3.A=C 4.D 5.A,B, 6.C 7.A 8.B 9.D 10.A

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We believe it would mprove the quality of life in the Lehigh Valley if all people

were legally protected from unfair discrimination based upon actual or perceived: race, color, religion, national origin,

national origin, ancestry or place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, age, handicap or disability, or use of a

guide animal, in the guide animal, in the areas of employment, housing, and public accommodation.

PA-GALA

Valley Free Press Allentown Human

Relations Commission Lehigh University

Safe-Space at Lehigh University

PFLAG Lehigh Valley

ACCO - A Chorus Celebrating Wome GLORA

Pride of the LV

LV Gay Men's Chorus **GLB Student Union**

at NCC The Lehigh Valley Labor Party

EQUAL! at Lucent

Metropolitan Community Church LV OutThere-Cedar Crest

6th Street Shelter Allentown

LV Community Action Committee

GLEF at Air Products

FACT (Fighting AIDS Continuously Together)

AIDS OUTREACH

The Unitarian Universalist Church I V

GLOSS

LEPOCO

GLISN of **Dun & Bradstreet**

AIDS Service Center

Theatre Outlet

Integrity-Bethlehem The Lehigh Valle Religious

Society of Friends (Quakers)

Civic Theater 19th Street Theater

The Latin Alliance

The Enigma Players

New Covenant Family Ministries

Properties of Merit

Allentown City Democratic

To add your organization to this list, call 610-432-5449 or email VFP

OUOTE

...When Rev. Elizabeth Goudy of the Metropolitan Community Church, the Church that hosted and organized the event, introduced the clergy members present for the ceremony, the entire congregation and attendees, well over 150 people, spontaneously rose to their feet and applauded them. When the group of ministers themselves then rose to their feet and applauded all the people there to take part in the service, cheers and tears of joy accompanied the moment. It is something I will remember for the rest of my

From an unpublished Letter to the Editor of the Morning Call, about the article on MCCLV's Ecumenical Blessing of Relationships Service for National Freedom To Marry Day By Patricia Sullivan

ANOTHER QUOTE

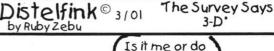
"And let's review: Only Dick Cheney, the Bush Whisperer, has the gay daughter. His lovely wife Lon Cheney, demurs on the dyke thing."

Kate Clinton in the March 27, 2001Advocate

EASTON PRIDE?

Easton's downtown merchant association, "Proud Renaissance in Downtown Easton," has used the acronym PRIDE since 1988, but is now considering a name change. PRIDE's president Cass Kwan said the group has been advised to change the name to avoid confusion with gay pride organizations and to avoid the possibility of a legal challenge over the use of the name. Though no legal challenge had actually been suggested.

VFP wonders whether EASTON PRIDE has suffered predudice due to their name, and if so, whether they are working to pass local legislation to protect local gay businesses and individuals who have suffered the same way.



voufeelmore dimensional? Hey look, somebody

put a drop-shadow behind us.



Would it be funnier to say. "Lamont Cranston."

or, "Only the Shadow Knows?

The editorial columns and political cartoon that appear in \lambdalley Free Press express the opinions of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion

or attitude of this publication. VFPmakes no indication of the sexual orientation of persons, organizations, or businesses mentioned in any issue.